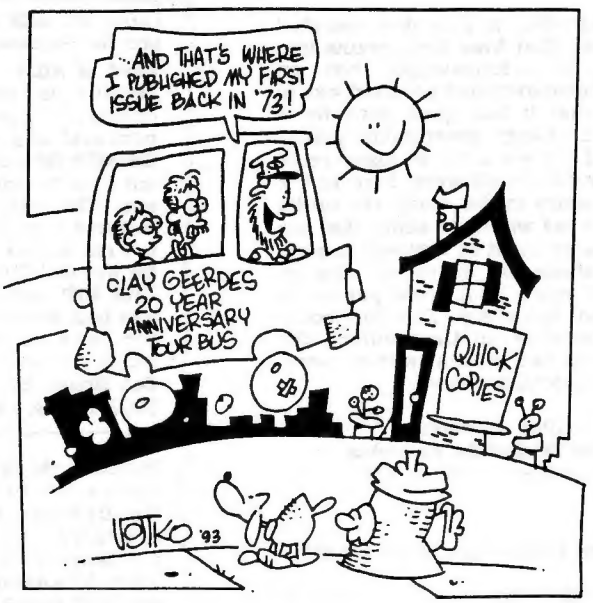

CLAY GEERDES **COMIX WAVE** 133
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Ace Backwards has done the cover for John Hoffman's amazing book, **THE ART AND SCIENCE OF DUMPSTER DIVING.** Yes, this is a book about a guy who dives into dumpsters and lives off the many unusual things he finds discarded there. And the guy isn't even a dylan groupie like A. J. Weberman who used to go through bob dylan's garbage! I got a dumpster story for you that Hoffman never included or he may and I missed it. A few years back a doctor named William Douglas who worked out of Tufts University got himself involved with a prostitute in Boston and he wound up killing her and stashing her body in a dumpster. Well, they never found the body because by the time he confessed the deed, the dumpsters had long been emptied. So they could simply go and dig her out of the landfill, right? Wrong. A year had passed and when the state of Massachusetts computed the cost of going through all that garbage to find the body they decided it was an impossible task and dropped the idea. Douglas was convicted and sent to do his time. If anyone dove into that dumpster while his victim was decaying therein, the diver never mentioned it. $16.95 PP from Loompanics Ltd., POB 1197, Port Townsend, WA 98368.

If anyone tells you the rich didn't get richer under Reagan/Bush while the poor got bupkis, I suggest you turn them on to New York University Econ prof. Ed Wolff's recent study of American wealth. The richest 1/2 per cent saw their average wealth grow from 8.5 mil in 1983 to $10.7 mil in 1989 [26%]. Most of the wealth was due to capital gains. During this period, the indebtedness of American households increased from 15% of net worth to almost 19 per cent.

Don't miss Martin Emond's great artwork in **WHITE TRASH 1.** Kind of a parody of everything that typifies the American redneck shitkicker. Elements of **Easy Rider** and **The Blues Brothers** and all the road movies made by Burt Reynolds and Clint Eastwood. I found one at Comic Relief in Berkeley.

Clark Dissmeyer sent me a copy of an article by Sharon Waxman which appeared in The Washington **POST** [5/25/92]. It's a piece on Crumb's current lifestyle in the South of France. "The Man Whose Muse is Misery," talks about Crumb and his most recent work in **HUP**. Seems Crumb is keeping up with his music and playing in a band called *Les Primitifs de Futur* [Primitives of the Future] once in a while. Crumb told Waxman Toyoto offered him a gig, but never wrote back when he suggested an ad showing his Demon Vulturesses being stuffed into a Toyota by Mr. Snoid.

Did Hitler really have nightmares about Al Goldstein? Did Peter Bagge really draw a comic strip about a secretary named **TRULI GODAWFUL**? Is perversity a privilege that belongs to the ruling class? All of these questions and more are answered in the first issue of **SCREW COMICS** from Eros, America's foremost purveyor of pornographic comic books. $4 by mail [say you're over 21 and a bonafide adult] from Box 25070, Seattle, WA 98125-1970. *And, yes, Al Goldstein still owes me $25 for a photo he solicited for an issue of* ***SCREW*** *back in the early seventies when it was a New York tabloid.* --C.G..

Television is electronic junk food, filling at the moment, but ultimately empty. a number of writers have argued that print is obsolete in hi-tech culture, but there are still readers around. After all, a programmer has to be literate in both human and machine language in order to enhance and perpetuate hi-tech culture. At the same time, literacy is becoming more exclusive, rarer. As the fees rise at colleges and universities, the less literate drop out and join the growing pool of service labor. For the future this means a wider and wider gap between the professions and those who maintain the lower level services necessary to civilization. C.G.

Typo of theYear Award

Michael [Jackson] needed a dazzling idea to promote the film. The unfolding of publicity to promote *Captain EO* is an excellent example of how a celebrity of Jackson's stature can manipulate the press if he surrounds himself with shrewd pubic relations experts.

J. Randy Taraborrelli
Michael Jackson:
The Magic and the Madness
Ballantine Books, p. 424.

The Origin of Medical Wealth

I have become impatient in recent years when I read of a sickness that seems to be infecting the young medical doctors of this nation. Before entering medical school, a would-be doctor marries a young nurse who will earn a small salary and support him till he gets started in his profession. Then, when the money starts rolling in and he finds himself at the center of his community's social life, he awakens to the fact that his wife is merely a country girl with no advanced education who does not do him justice in his new position. So he divorces her, shares none of his wealth with her, and replaces her with a younger and better-educated wife, with whom he can dominate the country club set.

James A. Michener
The Novel, 1991

Would you believe Garry Trudeau finally sold out and went commercial with t-shirts and buttons, etc? His catalog in the January **SPY** is no put on. I saw some of that stuff at Comic Relief in Berkeley. Can Watterson be far behind?

There is a hunger for art that reflects the real struggle and feelings of people. People's art is systematically discouraged or sanitized. Form becomes all-important while social content is diluted. Artists have to work for affluent people, the ones who buy their works or finance their foundation grants. So their options are often limited.

-Michael Parenti, 1992

I have a vivid memory of standing in a corner at a party and watching Andy Warhol watching everyone else. Warhol was kind of a cult leader, and a voyeur. I was fascinated by the way he saw the world, and the way the world let itself be seen by him. He was always near the center of the best parties, with Halston and Elizabeth Taylor and Liza Minelli, and he would just sit there and let the spectacle wash over him. He often provided the drugs and sometimes the settings, and these stars of the moment would perform. He was like a puppeteer, always two steps away from the main spotlight. Its always struck me as strange, in the years since, when people described Andy Warhol as being a part of that crowd, because he wasn't a part of it at all, at least not from where I sat. He was the ringmaster, never one of the circus clowns.

Geraldo Rivera
EXPOSING MYSELF, 1991.

EAT THIS COMIC AND DIE!

In case you thought a preoccupation with death was the exclusive province of underground companies who publish titles like **SLOW DEATH FUNNIES**, DC continues to explore the dark side in the Vertigo line, a group of comics distinguished by a gray, bleak, depressing look. **DEATH** is now a three issue mini-series and is personified not by the Grim Reaper but by a woman. This one is enlightened, but not lightened by the art of Chris Bachalo who I enjoyed during the current run of **SHADE THE INCREDIBLE CHANGING MAN**, a revival of Steve Ditko's enigmatic character. Peter Milligan did the writing for the new **Shade** and the range of material and ideas was impressive. I can't say the same for **ENIGMA**, a morose script about a lizard man who goes around sucking out people's brains. Yuk! If you wonder why death is getting such big play at DC these days, it's probably because it sells well to teenage readers who are notorious for having funeral fantasies and thinking about the various ways they might off themselves to teach the world and their unappreciative parents a lesson. Death has always been a cartoon staple. How many times has Wily Coyote died in Chuck Jones' Road Runner cartoons only to be resurrected a split second later? Death is good box office and the more killings the bigger the ticket sales. One of the top collectibles right now is **Punisher**, a clone of the **Exterminator**. Dracula's going through another cycle. Poor old bloodsucker. Makes you wonder why they never focus on the eating behavior of other characters, after all, the Count is just having dinner, folks. He can't help it if he's something of a cannibal. They would probably show you Superman eating, but he'd probably be drinking battery acid like that alien woman in **MY STEPMOTHER IS AN ALIEN** since he's from Krypton and his body density certainly couldn't assimilate the kind of protein needed to repair human cells. As for Batman, he probably eats insects like those entomologists who publish the *Food Insects Newsletter* at the University of Wisconsin. Wonder Woman is probably a vegan.

Life these days is made up of loops. Loops within loops. To be in the loop is to know all the latest gossip and manifest the correct attitude toward it along with the correct image. Not to do so is to be out of the loop and to be out of the loop is to be uncool, un-hip, and basically rejected and unwanted by all of those whose reality depends upon staying in the loop. The loops, of course, differ from class to class; image, attitude, and gossip are peculiar to social class and in our current social order the loops are manufactured and may often resemble nooses. The loop may be an economic noose around the victim's neck. But relax. If you're reading this, you're safely within the comic loop.

The writer never writes it the way you see it and the photo never shows you the way you think you look. The writer doesn't write about you. He may interview you, but what he writes is his experience of you and since that is not your experience of you, how could you recognize yourself in it? Make sense?

...I realized what it was that petrified these people, that froze their brains into gridlock. To acknowledge that an organized conspiracy had occurred was to recognize that it had been done for a purpose--to change government policy. Having told the world for so many years how wonderful we all were, here in the greatest country in the world, the media people were not willing to admit that our national leader could be removed in such brutal fashion in order to change government policy. That would put the lie to American democracy. That just could not be. Therefore, in their minds, the assassination had to be a random event, the work of a deranged loner.

Jim Garrison
On The Trail of the Assassins.
Warner Books, 1988, p. 148.

The Latest From Davey Jones' Locker

There's an organization in St. Petersburg, Florida, that calls itself Christians for Renewed Family Values. They sell a free Christian memorial and ash-scattering service. For a 'love offering' of $50 to $100 you can have the ashes of your loved one scattered in the 'warm' Gulf of Mexico from the good ship 'M. V. 23rd Psalm.' After this 'dignified service,' your family will be issued a memorial certificate indicating the date, latitude, and longitude of the scattering. Headings on the certificates include Gone With The Wind, Cruising Into Forever, A Salty Farewell, and For Whom The Bell Buoy Tolls. The brochure doesn't say, but I'll bet they take plastic. -C.G.

CARJACKING

The latest scam along the coast is called carjacking. What happens is some guy comes up to you in a parking lot or at an intersection, pokes a gun in your face, and takes not only your wallet, but your car keys. He then speeds off with your car, while you try to figure out what to do. You are seldom next to a pay phone even if the thief has left you the coins to put in it, and by the time you have called in your license number the thief has probably ditched your car and stolen a replacement. Sometimes, the thief just drives his own junker right into you, then when you get out to raise hell, you see a gun pointed at you. This happened in Berkeley the other day. The thief stole a red BMW after rearending it. Carjacks have taken place at all hours of the day and night and in many different locations. Car theft has been common around here for years and it might surprise you to know that it's not just the hot cars like the MR-5s, etc. that get stolen. Older model American cars are often stolen and driven to Mexico and some models of Dodge and Chevrolet and Ford seem to be favorites, probably because the parts are easy to get and the mechanics South of the border know how to fix these cars, while they are not up on the latest computerized Japanese models.

Uncle Clay's advice is keep your car locked when you are inside of it and leave it unlocked when you are not. Carpopping is a junkie trip and the guy who is looking for a little loose dope or some casual cash in the glove compartment doesn't care if your car is locked or not. He'll just smash the window and you'll pony up at least $150 these days to have it fixed. The car thief who wants your car probably has the same tools a mechanic has and can get in whether you lock the car or not. If you leave the car unlocked, the junkie will just get in and look around then leave to look for dope and money elsewhere. It goes without saying if you leave anything that looks valuable on your seat, you might as well leave the door open and kiss it goodbye. I work at a local club and one of the things I see quite often is people coming in and paying the cover, then going back to the parking lot to put their purse or wallet in the trunk or under the front seat. Well, if I can see it, so do the guys hanging out on the corner or in the pizza joint. People seem to think the thieves are as dumb as they are. If they were, they wouldn't survive on the street for a minute. Only certain car stereos are routinely stolen and I suspect people who have installation experience, because it is not easy to get a car stereo in or out. Takes a lot longer than your casual thief cares to hang around, particularly in a lighted lot. Today's eletronics are built into the dash and very difficult to steal. Maybe that's why the entire car is stolen. Car Alarms are useless and only irritate people. Anyone who has one in their neighborhood would cheer the thief who stole the damned thing, not call the police to help out the owner. Dave Hurst, a spokesperson for State Farm Insurance said,"We have not seen any evidence that having such devices makes any impact on our experience with auto theft. " Large insurance companies only offer anti-theft when required by law and this law is active in only 10 states.

So again, Uncle Clay says leave the car unlocked and take your chances. That smashed window will cost you a lot to replace and your deductable won't cover it. The glass may also damage your upholstery. Park in a guarded lot whenever possible. There may be signs talking about limited liability, but these mean nothing. You can always sue in Small Claims Court and take your chances.

Latest **WE ARE THE WEIRD** features an obit for deceased Psycho Tony Perkins, dead of AIDS. Hell of an actor. My favorite is not the Norman Bates character, however. I prefer Perkins portrayal of a sex-crazed evangelist in **CRIMES OF PASSION**. Tony got to work out all of the kinks in his psyche in that one. The video has all of the outtakes restored and sometimes this is a plus, but not always. They let Pekinpah have his way with **PAT GARRETT AND BILLY THE KID** and the stuff he put back in was best left in the cutting bin. Get all the news about drive-in culture and pictures of almost-naked girls from Joe Bob Briggs' zine. $3. for a sample. POB 2002, Dallas, TX 75221.

Martin Barker's study of the effect of EC comics on British readers and the Wertham campaign in general has been reprinted by the University of Mississippi Press. **A HAUNT OF FEARS: THE STRANGE HISTORY OF THE BRITISH HORROR COMICS CAMPAIGN** will sell for $35 in hard cover and $14.95 paper. Best add a couple of dollars to cover post and handling. I have read this study and found it accurate and quite well done. I recommend it to other comic historians. C. G.